

## **POLICY 1121**

### **Community Relations 1121**

#### **Communication with the Public and Media**

#### **Responsibilities of Board Members and School Personnel**

New avenues should constantly be sought to improve relations and communications with all segments of the community and to expand such efforts with audiences not presently engaged.

In Board matters requiring public reactions, an effort should be made to include staff, parents, and students.

In matters regarding the dissemination of information, it is the responsibility of each Board member, as well as each employee of the district, to exercise care when answering questions about the public schools. All school personnel should answer questions only when they have full and complete understanding of the point about which they have been asked. If the employee or Board member is not prepared to answer accurately and fully, he/she should refer the inquirer to a staff member who would have the appropriate information.

All school personnel and Board members are encouraged to be informed on Board of Education policy, school policies, and programs in order that they may better advance public understanding of the schools. Board members are reminded that they have no individual authority unless the Board of Education is in session.

#### **News Media Relationships**

Schools are public institutions serving the educational needs of the community. Therefore, it is important that information be disseminated concerning programs, activities, and significant school events. To ensure that this publicity be given wide coverage and coordinated with a common effort and purpose, the following procedures shall be followed with the news media:

1. News releases of a system-wide nature, or which pertain to established school system policy, are the responsibility of the Superintendent and will be issued through his/her office.

2. News releases, which are of concern to only one school or to an organization of one school, are the responsibility of the respective building principal.

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Communication with the Public and Media (2)

Responsibilities of Board Members and School Personnel (continued)

Board meetings to which the public has access may be photographed, broadcast, or recorded for broadcast by any newspaper, radio broadcasting company, or television broadcasting company, subject to the following guidelines:

1. News media personnel who intend to photograph, broadcast, or record for broadcast the proceedings of any public meeting of the Board of Education shall provide appropriate identification, if requested, to the Superintendent of Schools, prior to said meeting of the Board.

2. Only news media personnel employed by a newspaper, radio, or television broadcasting company, or personnel of a recognized student news medium assigned to cover the proceedings of a Board of Education public meeting, shall be permitted to photograph, broadcast, or record for broadcast, such proceedings.

3. Any photographer, broadcaster, or news journalist authorized by an employer, or a student news medium, may photograph, broadcast, or record for broadcast, proceedings at a public meeting of the Board of Education. Any personnel associated with said photographer, broadcaster, journalist, or student, shall photograph, broadcast, or record for broadcast proceedings of said meeting as inconspicuously as possible and in a manner that will not disturb the proceedings.

4. If, in the judgment of the Chairperson of the Board of Education, the presence of any photographer, broadcaster, news journalist, or student at a Board meeting, causes such disruption that the orderly conduct of the public business becomes not feasible, access by these individuals may be limited to the extent necessary to remove disruption.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-226 Recording, broadcasting, or photographing meetings.

Policy adopted: December 8, 1975

Revised: October 27, 2003